



Agenda Item No. _____

File Code No. _____

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: January 11, 2011

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Housing and Redevelopment Division, Community Development Department

SUBJECT: Request From Mayor Schneider And Councilmember House
Regarding A Funding Request From Freedom Warming Centers

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council consider the request from Mayor Schneider and Councilmember House regarding the funding request from The Unitarian Society to support the Freedom Warming Centers in Santa Barbara this winter.

DISCUSSION:

On December 7, 2010 the City received a letter from Nancy Edmundson, Director of Administration for The Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara requesting financial assistance from the City in the amount of \$10,000 to operate the Freedom Warming Centers in Santa Barbara this winter.

The Centers began as a volunteer effort last winter as a result of the death of Paul Bradshaw, a homeless man known as Freedom. The purpose of the Centers is to provide temporary refuge for homeless persons who would otherwise refuse to seek shelter in places like Casa Esperanza or the Rescue Mission during severe cold weather. The Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara has agreed to be the program's fiscal agent.

The Centers operate countywide and open whenever a County-developed Inclement Weather Trigger occurs. The triggers are any of the three following scenarios: 1) There are two consecutive nights in which there is a 50% chance of rain or greater; 2) Any night when temperatures are expected to drop below 35 degrees without rain; or 3) Any night when temperatures are expected to drop below 40 degrees and rain is expected.

The South County Coordinator, Dr. Lynn Jahnke, is responsible for checking the National Weather Service and opening the South County centers, as well as notifying the appropriate parties, such as law enforcement, of the available warming locations. The Warming Centers in Santa Barbara are located in two downtown-area locations: The Unitarian Society at Arrellaga and Santa Barbara Streets and The First Methodist Church on the corner of Garden and Anapamu Streets.

The County has provided \$51,781 to help fund Centers in cities throughout the County. Activation of the warming centers is contingent upon the availability of funds. If approved, and a source of funds identified, City funds would only be used to help support the Santa Barbara locations.

The Freedom Warming Center staff has been strongly encouraged to seek City funds in the future by applying for Human Services grants during the normal application cycles.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

Staff has researched and identified two possible one-time funding source options should Council wish to provide financial support to the Warming Centers.

Option 1: Allocate \$10,000 from the annual interest earned on the Coastal Zone Affordable Overnight Accommodation Fund. In Fiscal Year 2006, the City received just over \$1 million for an overnight accommodation mitigation fee that resulted from the issuance of a Coastal Development Permit for the Entrada Project. Interest earned on this fund can be used at Council's discretion.

Option 2: Reprogram \$9,574 from reimbursed and/or revoked Human Services funds. Council has the option to use reimbursed or revoked Human Services funds for any approved purpose. A total of \$9,574 is available from unused Human Services funds including \$1,574 from Fiscal Year 2010 reimbursed grant funds and \$8,000 from Fiscal Year 2011 revoked grant funds.

- Reimbursed Human Services Grant Funds: In Fiscal Year 2010 Council approved a grant of \$15,000 to the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) to pay for contract forensic interviewers that specialize in working with children or developmentally disabled adults. Since the program only incurs forensic-interviewer costs when an assault occurs. SART returned unused funds totaling \$1,574 during Fiscal Year 2011. These funds have been returned to the General Fund, which is the protocol for any unused Human Services funds.
- Revoked Fiscal Year 2011 Funds: On March 23, 2010 as part of the Human Services funding process, Council approved a grant to the Environmental Education Group for the Esperanza, La Voz de Nuestra Comunidad program in the amount of \$8,000 for Fiscal Year 2011. Staff subsequently sent out a contract packet to be executed by the City and the agency, as is required of all recipients of Human Services funds. Despite numerous attempts by staff, via telephone calls and emails, the agency was unresponsive and never signed or returned the contract.

The Community Development and Human Services Committee, which made the funding recommendation to Council, voted at its October 26, 2010 meeting to revoke its funding recommendation, a decision which is required to be ratified by Council. It should be noted that this was the first time a Human Service grant has ever been revoked. If ratified by Council, the \$8,000 will be returned to the General Fund as well, per existing protocol.

If not approved for the Freedom Warming Centers, these funds will be returned to the General Fund at the end of the Fiscal Year.

ATTACHMENTS: 1. Funding request letter from The Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara
2. Letter to City Administrator from Mayor Schneider and Councilmember House

PREPARED BY: Brian Bosse, Housing and Redevelopment Manager/DER/ES

SUBMITTED BY: Paul Casey, Assistant City Administrator

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office



The Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara

Rev. Aaron McEmrys, Parish Minister
Rev. John Alexie Crane, Minister Emeritus
Nancy Edmundson, Director of Administration
LeeAnn Williams, Director of Lifespan Religious Education

December 7, 2010

Honorable Helene Schneider
735 Anacapa St.
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Dear Mayor Schneider,

I am writing you to make a request of the City of Santa Barbara for immediate funds in the amount of \$10,000 to support the current Freedom Warming Center activities that began December 1, 2010 and will continue through March 31, 2011. The Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara is serving as fiscal agent for the Warming Centers, and we are actively building an interfaith coalition of Santa Barbara congregations to support the operations of the Warming Centers.

As I am certain you are well aware, the operation of the Warming Centers is focused on addressing the needs of some of Santa Barbara's most vulnerable residents. The funds made available from the County of Santa Barbara will ensure only 27 service nights for the centers, and we do anticipate as many as 50 total service nights this year.

These funds from the City of Santa Barbara will be utilized with funds from the County of Santa Barbara as well as generous private donors in Santa Barbara and a growing coalition of faith communities in Santa Barbara.

I appreciate your consideration of our most urgent request. If you have any questions I encourage you to contact me.

Sincerely,

Nancy Edmundson
Director of Administration
director@ussb.org

CC: James Armstrong, Brian Boose



City of Santa Barbara
City Administrator's Office

Memorandum

DATE: December 8, 2010

TO: Jim Armstrong, City Administrator

FROM: Councilmember Grant House
Mayor Helene Schneider

SUBJECT: Request by Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara to fund Freedom Warming Centers

Pursuant to Council Resolution 05-073 regarding the Conduct of City Council Meetings, we request that an item be placed on the Santa Barbara City Council Agenda regarding Funding for the Freedom Warming Centers within the City of Santa Barbara.

- Summary of information to be presented:

To hear a presentation from the Unitarian Society about their request for \$10,000 for warming centers (see attached request from the Unitarian Society)

- Statement of Specific Action:

The specific action to be taken by the City Council at this meeting will be to authorize funds to The Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara for the continued operation of the Freedom Warming Center of Santa Barbara.

- Statement of the Reasons Why it is Appropriate and Within the Jurisdiction of the Council to Consider this Subject Matter and to Take the Requested Action:

A Council discussion of this subject is appropriate and within the jurisdiction of the City Council due to the public health and safety concerns of homeless persons during the cold and/or rainy nights this winter when local shelters are at full capacity, per the County of Santa Barbara Emergency Warming Center Protocol.

We are requesting that this be scheduled for the January 11, 2011 Council meeting.

cc: Mayor and Council
City Attorney
Community Development Director